

STOP Expanded

When we find ourselves triggered, reactive or caught up in emotions, STOP can help bring us home to a full mindfulness by directing our attention in a clear, systematic way. Here are the four key steps:

- S Stop**
- T Take a breath**
- O Observe** with an *Intimate* attention
- P Proceed.**

Observe:

- Listening in a kind, receptive, curious way to thoughts, body sensations and emotions. Directly contact the felt sense of the experience, i.e. what is happening for you now, in this moment?
- Allowing life to be just as it is. We are agreeing only to the experience *in the present moment, not condoning the situation or another person's behavior.*
- Investigating with an Intimate Attention:

What's here now?

Where are you noticing it in your body?

What are you feeling in your body at the level of physical sensation?

If there is a persistent thought or emotion, where do you notice it in the body?

What about this is most calling your attention?

Does it move or change over time?

Is there variation as you breathe in and as you breathe out?

The result of doing STOP when triggered:

Observing your experience with intimate attention begins to create a space that softens the harsh edges. Your entire being is not so rallied in resistance.

You may experience:

- more choice about how to respond to life.
- new possibilities opening up.
- fresh ways of relating with ourselves, with loved ones and colleagues.
- more feelings of gratitude and greater ease.